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Provincial Policy Statement

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This Provincial Policy Statement was issued under Section 3 of the *Planning Act* and came into effect March 1, 2005. It replaces the Provincial Policy Statement issued May 22, 1996, and amended February 1, 1997.

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Part I: PREAMBLE

The Provincial Policy Statement provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. As a key part of Ontario's policy-led planning system, the Provincial Policy Statement sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land. It also supports the provincial goal to enhance the quality of life for the citizens of Ontario.

The Provincial Policy Statement provides for appropriate development while protecting resources of provincial interest, public health and safety, and the quality of the natural environment. The Provincial Policy Statement supports improved land use planning and management, which contributes to a more effective and efficient land use planning system.

The policies of the Provincial Policy Statement may be complemented by provincial plans or by locally-generated policies regarding matters of municipal interest. Provincial plans and municipal official plans provide a framework for comprehensive, integrated and long-term planning that supports and integrates the principles of strong communities, a clean and healthy environment and economic growth, for the long term.

Land use planning is only one of the tools for implementing provincial interests. A wide range of legislation, regulations, policies and programs may also affect planning matters, and assist in implementing these interests.

Part II: LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The Provincial Policy Statement is issued under the authority of Section 3 of the *Planning Act* and came into effect on March 1, 2005. It applies to all applications, matters or proceedings commenced on or after March 1, 2005.

In respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter, Section 3 of the *Planning Act* requires that decisions affecting planning matters "shall be consistent with" policy statements issued under the Act.

Part III: HOW TO READ THE PROVINCIAL POLICY STATEMENT

A policy-led planning system recognizes and addresses the complex inter-relationships among environmental, economic and social factors in land use planning. The Provincial Policy Statement supports a comprehensive, integrated and long-term approach to planning, and recognizes linkages among policy areas.

The Provincial Policy Statement is more than a set of individual policies. It is intended to be read in its entirety and the relevant policies are to be applied to each situation. A decision-maker should read all of the relevant policies as if they are specifically cross-referenced with each

other. While specific policies sometimes refer to other policies for ease of use, these cross-references do not take away from the need to read the Provincial Policy Statement as a whole.

Part IV, Vision for Ontario's Land Use Planning System, provides the context for applying the Provincial Policy Statement. Implementation issues are addressed in the Implementation and Interpretation section.

Except for references to legislation which are traditionally italicized, italicized terms in the Provincial Policy Statement are defined in the Definitions section. For other terms, the normal meaning of the word applies. Terms may be italicized only in specific policies; for these terms, the defined meaning applies where they are italicized and the normal meaning applies where they are not italicized. Defined terms in the Definitions section are intended to capture both singular and plural forms of these terms in the policies.

There is no implied priority in the order in which the policies appear.

Part IV: VISION FOR ONTARIO'S LAND USE PLANNING SYSTEM

The long-term prosperity and social well-being of Ontarians depend on maintaining strong communities, a clean and healthy environment and a strong economy.

Ontario is a vast province with diverse urban, rural and northern communities which may face different challenges related to diversity in population levels, economic activity, pace of growth and physical and natural conditions. Some areas face challenges related to maintaining population and diversifying their economy, while other areas face challenges related to accommodating and managing the development and population growth which is occurring, while protecting important resources and the quality of the natural environment. The Provincial Policy Statement reflects this diversity and is based on good planning principles that apply in communities across Ontario.

The Provincial Policy Statement focuses growth within settlement areas and away from significant or sensitive resources and areas which may pose a risk to public health and safety. It recognizes that the wise management of development may involve directing, promoting or sustaining growth. Land use must be carefully managed to accommodate appropriate development to meet the full range of current and future needs, while achieving efficient development patterns.

Efficient development patterns optimize the use of land, resources and public investment in infrastructure and public service facilities. These land use patterns promote a mix of housing, employment, parks and open spaces, and transportation choices that facilitate pedestrian mobility and other modes of travel. They also support the financial well-being of the Province and municipalities over the long term, and minimize the undesirable effects of development, including impacts on air, water and other resources. Strong, liveable and healthy communities enhance social well-being and are economically and environmentally sound.

The Province's natural heritage resources, water, agricultural lands, mineral resources, and cultural heritage and archaeological resources provide important environmental, economic and social benefits. The wise use and management of these resources over the long term is a key provincial interest. The Province must ensure that its resources are managed in a sustainable way to protect essential ecological processes and public health and safety, minimize environmental and social impacts, and meet its long-term needs.

It is equally important to protect the overall health and safety of the population. The Provincial Policy Statement directs development away from areas of natural and human-made hazards, where these hazards cannot be mitigated. This preventative approach supports provincial and municipal financial well-being over the long term, protects public health and safety, and minimizes cost, risk and social disruption.

Taking action to conserve land and resources avoids the need for costly remedial measures to correct problems and supports economic and environmental principles.

Strong communities, a clean and healthy environment and a strong economy are inextricably linked. Long-term prosperity, environmental health and social well-being should take precedence over short-term considerations.

The fundamental principles set out in the Provincial Policy Statement apply throughout Ontario, despite regional variations. To support our collective well-being, now and in the future, all land use must be well managed.

The Vision for Ontario's Land Use Planning System may be further articulated through planning direction for specific areas of the Province issued through provincial plans, such as those plans created under the *Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act* and the *Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act, 2001*, which are approved by the Lieutenant Governor in Council or the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Part V: POLICIES

1.0 BUILDING STRONG COMMUNITIES

Ontario's long-term prosperity, environmental health and social well-being depend on wisely managing change and promoting efficient land use and development patterns. Efficient land use and development patterns support strong, liveable and healthy communities, protect the environment and public health and safety, and facilitate economic growth.

Accordingly:

1.1 MANAGING AND DIRECTING LAND USE TO ACHIEVE EFFICIENT DEVELOPMENT AND LAND USE PATTERNS

1.1.1 Healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by:

a) promoting efficient development and land use patterns which sustain the financial well-being of the Province and municipalities over the long term;
b) accommodating an appropriate range and mix of residential, employment (including industrial, commercial and institutional uses), recreational and open space uses to meet long-term needs;
c) avoiding development and land use patterns which may cause environmental or public health and safety concerns;
d) avoiding development and land use patterns that would prevent the efficient expansion of *settlement areas* in those areas which are adjacent or close to *settlement areas*;
e) promoting cost-effective development standards to minimize land consumption and servicing costs;
f) improving accessibility for persons with disabilities and the elderly by removing and/or preventing land use barriers which restrict their full participation in society; and
g) ensuring that necessary *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* are or will be available to meet current and projected needs.

1.1.2 Sufficient land shall be made available through *intensification* and *redevelopment* and, if necessary, *designated growth areas*, to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of employment opportunities, housing and other land uses to meet projected needs for a time horizon of up to 20 years. However, where an alternate time period has been established for specific areas of the Province as a result of a provincial planning exercise or a *provincial plan*, that time frame may be used for municipalities within the area.

1.1.3 Settlement Areas

1.1.3.1 *Settlement areas* shall be the focus of growth and their vitality and regeneration shall be promoted.

1.1.3.2 Land use patterns within *settlement areas* shall be based on:

a) densities and a mix of land uses which:
   1. efficiently use land and resources;
   2. are appropriate for, and efficiently use, the *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* which are planned or available, and avoid the need for their unjustified and/or uneconomical expansion; and
   3. minimize negative impacts to air quality and climate change, and promote energy efficiency in accordance with policy 1.8; and

b) a range of uses and opportunities for *intensification* and *redevelopment* in accordance with the criteria in policy 1.1.3.3.

1.1.3.3 Planning authorities shall identify and promote opportunities for *intensification* and *redevelopment* where this can be accommodated taking into account existing building stock or areas, including *brownfield sites*, and the availability of suitable existing or planned *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* required to accommodate projected needs.

Intensification and *redevelopment* shall be directed in accordance with the policies of Section 2: Wise Use and Management of Resources and Section 3: Protecting Public Health and Safety.

1.1.3.4 Appropriate development standards should be promoted which facilitate *intensification, redevelopment* and compact form, while maintaining appropriate levels of public health and safety.

1.1.3.5 Planning authorities shall establish and implement minimum targets for *intensification* and *redevelopment* within built-up areas. However, where provincial targets are established through *provincial plans*, the provincial target shall represent the minimum target for affected areas.

1.1.3.6 Planning authorities shall establish and implement phasing policies to ensure that specified targets for *intensification* and *redevelopment* are achieved prior to, or concurrent with, new development within *designated growth areas*.

1.1.3.7 New development taking place in *designated growth areas* should occur adjacent to the existing built-up area and shall have a compact form, mix of uses and densities that allow for the efficient use of land, *infrastructure* and *public service facilities*.

1.1.3.8 Planning authorities shall establish and implement phasing policies to ensure the orderly progression of development within *designated growth areas* and the timely provision of the *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* required to meet current and projected needs.

1.1.3.9 A planning authority may identify a *settlement area* or allow the expansion of a *settlement area* boundary only at the time of a *comprehensive review* and only where it has been demonstrated that:

a) sufficient opportunities for growth are not available through *intensification, redevelopment* and *designated growth areas* to accommodate the projected needs over the identified planning horizon;
b) the *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* which are planned or available are suitable for the development over the long term and protect public health and safety;
c) in *prime agricultural areas*:
   1. the lands do not comprise *specialty crop areas*;
   2. there are no reasonable alternatives which avoid *prime agricultural areas*; and
   3. there are no reasonable alternatives on lower priority agricultural lands in *prime agricultural areas*; and
d) impacts from new or expanding *settlement areas* on agricultural operations which are adjacent or close to the *settlement area* are mitigated to the extent feasible.

In determining the most appropriate direction for expansions to the boundaries of *settlement areas* or the identification of a *settlement area* by a planning authority, a planning authority shall apply the policies of Section 2: Wise Use and Management of Resources and Section 3: Protecting Public Health and Safety.

1.1.4 Rural Areas in Municipalities

1.1.4.1 In *rural areas* located in municipalities:

a) permitted uses and activities shall relate to the management or use of resources, resource-based recreational activities, limited residential development and other rural land uses;
b) development shall be appropriate to the *infrastructure* which is planned or available, and avoid the need for the unjustified and/or uneconomical expansion of this *infrastructure*;
c) new land uses, including the creation of lots, and new or expanding livestock facilities, shall comply with the *minimum distance separation formulae*;
d) development that is compatible with the rural landscape and can be sustained by rural service levels should be promoted;
e) locally-important agricultural and resource areas should be designated and protected by directing non-related development to areas where it will not constrain these uses;

f) opportunities should be retained to locate new or expanding land uses that require separation from other uses; and
g) recreational, tourism and other economic opportunities should be promoted.

1.1.5 Rural Areas in Territory Without Municipal Organization

1.1.5.1 In *rural areas* located in territory without municipal organization, the focus of development activity shall be activities and land uses related to the management or use of resources and resource-based recreational activities.

1.1.5.2 The establishment of new permanent townsites shall not be permitted.

1.1.5.3 In areas adjacent to and surrounding municipalities, only development that is related to the management or use of resources and resource-based recreational activity shall be permitted unless:

a) the area forms part of a planning area; and
b) it has been determined, as part of a *comprehensive review*, that the impacts of growth will not place an undue strain on the *public service facilities* and *infrastructure* provided by adjacent municipalities, regions and/or the Province.

1.2 COORDINATION

1.2.1 A coordinated, integrated and comprehensive approach should be used when dealing with planning matters within municipalities, or which cross lower, single and/or upper-tier municipal boundaries, including:

a) managing and/or promoting growth and development;
b) managing natural heritage, water, agricultural, mineral, and cultural heritage and archaeological resources;
c) *infrastructure*, *public service facilities* and *waste management systems*;
d) ecosystem, shoreline and watershed related issues;
e) natural and human-made hazards; and
f) population, housing and employment projections, based on *regional market areas*.

1.2.2 Where planning is conducted by an upper-tier municipality, the upper-tier municipality in consultation with lower-tier municipalities shall:

a) identify, coordinate and allocate population, housing and employment projections for lower-tier municipalities. Allocations and projections by upper-tier municipalities shall be based on and reflect *provincial plans* where these exist;
b) identify areas where growth will be directed, including the identification of nodes and the corridors linking these nodes;

c) identify targets for *intensification* and *redevelopment* within all or any of the lower-tier municipalities, including minimum targets that should be met before expansion of the boundaries of *settlement areas* is permitted in accordance with policy 1.1.3.9;

d) where transit corridors exist or are to be developed, identify density targets for areas adjacent or in proximity to these corridors, including minimum targets that should be met before expansion of the boundaries of *settlement areas* is permitted in accordance with policy 1.1.3.9; and

e) identify and provide policy direction for the lower-tier municipalities on matters that cross municipal boundaries.

1.2.3 Where there is no upper-tier municipality, planning authorities shall ensure that policy 1.2.2 is addressed as part of the planning process, and should coordinate these matters with adjacent planning authorities.

1.3 EMPLOYMENT AREAS

1.3.1 Planning authorities shall promote economic development and competitiveness by:

a) providing for an appropriate mix and range of employment (including industrial, commercial and institutional uses) to meet long-term needs;

b) providing opportunities for a diversified economic base, including maintaining a range and choice of suitable sites for employment uses which support a wide range of economic activities and ancillary uses, and take into account the needs of existing and future businesses;

c) planning for, protecting and preserving *employment areas* for current and future uses; and

d) ensuring the necessary *infrastructure* is provided to support current and projected needs.

1.3.2 Planning authorities may permit conversion of lands within *employment areas* to non-employment uses through a *comprehensive review*, only where it has been demonstrated that the land is not required for employment purposes over the long term and that there is a need for the conversion.

1.4 HOUSING

1.4.1 To provide for an appropriate range of housing types and densities required to meet projected requirements of current and future residents of the *regional market area* identified in policy 1.4.3, planning authorities shall:

a) maintain at all times the ability to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 10 years through *residential intensification* and *redevelopment* and, if necessary, lands which are *designated and available* for residential development; and

b) maintain at all times where new development is to occur, land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a 3 year supply of residential units available through lands suitably zoned to facilitate *residential intensification* and *redevelopment*, and land in draft approved and registered plans.

1.4.2 Where planning is conducted by an upper-tier municipality:

a) the land and unit supply maintained by the lower-tier municipality identified in policy 1.4.1 shall be based on and reflect the allocation of population and units by the upper-tier municipality; and
b) the allocation of population and units by the upper-tier municipality shall be based on and reflect *provincial plans* where these exist.

1.4.3 Planning authorities shall provide for an appropriate range of housing types and densities to meet projected requirements of current and future residents of the *regional market area* by:

a) establishing and implementing minimum targets for the provision of housing which is *affordable* to *low and moderate income households*. However, where planning is conducted by an upper-tier municipality, the upper-tier municipality in consultation with the lower-tier municipalities may identify a higher target(s) which shall represent the minimum target(s) for these lower-tier municipalities;
b) permitting and facilitating:
   1. all forms of housing required to meet the social, health and well-being requirements of current and future residents, including *special needs* requirements; and
   2. all forms of *residential intensification* and *redevelopment* in accordance with policy 1.1.3.3;
c) directing the development of new housing towards locations where appropriate levels of *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* are or will be available to support current and projected needs;
d) promoting densities for new housing which efficiently use land, resources, *infrastructure* and *public service facilities*, and support the use of alternative transportation modes and public transit in areas where it exists or is to be developed; and
e) establishing development standards for *residential intensification*, *redevelopment* and new residential development which minimize the cost of housing and facilitate compact form, while maintaining appropriate levels of public health and safety.

1.5 PUBLIC SPACES, PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

1.5.1 Healthy, active communities should be promoted by:

a) planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of pedestrians, and facilitate pedestrian and non-motorized movement, including but not limited to, walking and cycling;
b) providing for a full range and equitable distribution of publicly-accessible built and natural settings for *recreation*, including facilities, parklands, open space areas, trails and, where practical, water-based resources;
c) providing opportunities for public access to shorelines; and
d) considering the impacts of planning decisions on provincial parks, conservation reserves and conservation areas.

1.6 INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC SERVICE FACILITIES

1.6.1 *Infrastructure* and *public service facilities* shall be provided in a coordinated, efficient and cost-effective manner to accommodate projected needs.

Planning for *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* shall be integrated with planning for growth so that these are available to meet current and projected needs.

1.6.2 The use of existing *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* should be optimized, wherever feasible, before consideration is given to developing new *infrastructure* and *public service facilities*.

1.6.3 *Infrastructure* and *public service facilities* should be strategically located to support the effective and efficient delivery of emergency management services.

Where feasible, *public service facilities* should be co-located to promote cost-effectiveness and facilitate service integration.

1.6.4 Sewage and Water

1.6.4.1 Planning for *sewage and water services* shall:

a) direct and accommodate expected growth in a manner that promotes the efficient use of existing:
   1. *municipal sewage services* and *municipal water services*; and
   2. *private communal sewage services* and *private communal water services*, where *municipal sewage services* and *municipal water services* are not available;
b) ensure that these systems are provided in a manner that:
   1. can be sustained by the water resources upon which such services rely;
   2. is financially viable and complies with all regulatory requirements; and
   3. protects human health and the natural environment;

c) promote water conservation and water use efficiency;
d) integrate servicing and land use considerations at all stages of the planning process; and
e) subject to the hierarchy of services provided in policies 1.6.4.2, 1.6.4.3 and 1.6.4.4, allow lot creation only if there is confirmation of sufficient *reserve sewage system capacity* and *reserve water system capacity* within *municipal sewage services* and *municipal water services* or *private communal sewage services* and *private communal water services*. The determination of sufficient *reserve sewage system capacity* shall include treatment capacity for hauled sewage from *private communal sewage services* and *individual on-site sewage services*.

1.6.4.2 *Municipal sewage services* and *municipal water services* are the preferred form of servicing for *settlement areas*. *Intensification* and *redevelopment* within *settlement areas* on existing *municipal sewage services* and *municipal water services* should be promoted, wherever feasible.

1.6.4.3 Municipalities may choose to use *private communal sewage services* and *private communal water services*, and where policy 1.6.4.4 permits, *individual on-site sewage services* and *individual on-site water services*, where:

a) *municipal sewage services* and *municipal water services* are not provided; and
b) the municipality has established policies to ensure that the services to be provided satisfy the criteria set out in policy 1.6.4.1.

1.6.4.4 *Individual on-site sewage services* and *individual on-site water services* shall be used for a new development of five or less lots or private residences where *municipal sewage services* and *municipal water services* or *private communal sewage services* and *private communal water services* are not provided and where site conditions are suitable for the long-term provision of such services. Despite this, *individual on-site sewage services* and *individual on-site water services* may be used to service more than five lots or private residences in *rural areas* provided these services are solely for those uses permitted by policy 1.1.4.1(a) and site conditions are suitable for the long-term provision of such services.

1.6.4.5 *Partial services* shall only be permitted in the following circumstances:

a) where they are necessary to address failed *individual on-site sewage services* and *individual on-site water services* in existing development; and
b) within *settlement areas*, to allow for infilling and rounding out of existing development on *partial services* provided that:
    1. the development is within the *reserve sewage system capacity* and *reserve water system capacity*; and
    2. site conditions are suitable for the long-term provision of such services.

1.6.5 Transportation Systems

1.6.5.1 *Transportation systems* should be provided which are safe, energy efficient, facilitate the movement of people and goods, and are appropriate to address projected needs.

1.6.5.2 Efficient use shall be made of existing and planned *infrastructure*.

1.6.5.3 Connectivity within and among *transportation systems* and modes should be maintained and, where possible, improved including connections which cross jurisdictional boundaries.

1.6.5.4 A land use pattern, density and mix of uses should be promoted that minimize the length and number of vehicle trips and support the development of viable choices and plans for public transit and other alternative transportation modes, including commuter rail and bus.

1.6.5.5 Transportation and land use considerations shall be integrated at all stages of the planning process.

1.6.6 Transportation and Infrastructure Corridors

1.6.6.1 Planning authorities shall plan for and protect corridors and rights-of-way for transportation, transit and *infrastructure* facilities to meet current and projected needs.

1.6.6.2 Planning authorities shall not permit *development* in *planned corridors* that could preclude or negatively affect the use of the corridor for the purpose(s) for which it was identified.

1.6.6.3 The preservation and reuse of abandoned corridors for purposes that maintain the corridor's integrity and continuous linear characteristics should be encouraged, wherever feasible.

1.6.6.4 When planning for corridors and rights-of-way for significant transportation and *infrastructure* facilities, consideration will be given to the significant resources in Section 2: Wise Use and Management of Resources.

1.6.7 Airports

1.6.7.1 Planning for land uses in the vicinity of *airports* shall be undertaken so that:

a) the long-term operation and economic role of *airports* is protected; and
b) *airports* and *sensitive land uses* are appropriately designed, buffered and/or separated from each other to prevent adverse effects from odour, noise and other contaminants.

1.6.7.2 *Airports* shall be protected from incompatible land uses and development by:

a) prohibiting new residential *development* and other sensitive land uses in areas near *airports* above 30 NEF/NEP, as set out on maps (as revised from time to time) that have been reviewed by Transport Canada;
b) considering redevelopment of existing residential uses and other sensitive land uses or infilling of residential and other sensitive land uses in areas above 30 NEF/NEP only if it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the long-term function of the *airport*; and
c) discouraging land uses which may cause a potential aviation safety hazard.

1.6.8 Waste Management

1.6.8.1 *Waste management systems* need to be provided that are of an appropriate size and type to accommodate present and future requirements, and facilitate, encourage and promote reduction, reuse and recycling objectives.

Waste management systems shall be located and designed in accordance with provincial legislation and standards.

1.7 LONG-TERM ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

1.7.1 Long-term economic prosperity should be supported by:

a) optimizing the long-term availability and use of land, resources, *infrastructure* and *public service facilities*;
b) maintaining and, where possible, enhancing the vitality and viability of downtowns and mainstreets;
c) promoting the redevelopment of *brownfield sites*;
d) providing for an efficient, cost-effective, reliable *multi-modal transportation system* that is integrated with adjacent systems and those of other jurisdictions, and is appropriate to address projected needs;
e) planning so that major facilities (such as airports, transportation/transit/rail infrastructure and corridors, intermodal facilities, sewage treatment facilities, waste management systems, oil and gas pipelines, industries and resource extraction activities) and *sensitive land uses* are appropriately designed, buffered and/or separated from each other to prevent *adverse effects* from odour, noise and other contaminants, and minimize risk to public health and safety;
f) providing opportunities for sustainable tourism development;
g) promoting the sustainability of the agri-food sector by protecting agricultural resources and minimizing land use conflicts; and
h) providing opportunities for increased energy generation, supply and conservation, including *alternative energy systems* and *renewable energy systems*.

1.8 ENERGY AND AIR QUALITY

1.8.1 Planning authorities shall support energy efficiency and improved air quality through land use and development patterns which:

a) promote compact form and a structure of nodes and corridors;
b) promote the use of public transit and other alternative transportation modes in and between residential, employment (including commercial, industrial and institutional uses) and other areas where these exist or are to be developed;
c) focus major employment, commercial and other travel-intensive land uses on sites which are well served by public transit where this exists or is to be developed, or designing these to facilitate the establishment of public transit in the future;
d) improve the mix of employment and housing uses to shorten commute journeys and decrease transportation congestion; and
e) promote design and orientation which maximize the use of alternative or renewable energy, such as solar and wind energy, and the mitigating effects of vegetation.

1.8.2 Increased energy supply should be promoted by providing opportunities for energy generation facilities to accommodate current and projected needs, and the use of *renewable energy systems* and *alternative energy systems*, where feasible.

1.8.3 *Alternative energy systems* and *renewable energy systems* shall be permitted in *settlement areas, rural areas* and *prime agricultural areas* in accordance with *provincial and federal requirements*. In *rural areas* and *prime agricultural areas*, these systems should be designed and constructed to minimize impacts on agricultural operations.

2.0 WISE USE AND MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES

Ontario's long-term prosperity, environmental health, and social well-being depend on protecting natural heritage, water, agricultural, mineral and cultural heritage and archaeological resources for their economic, environmental and social benefits.

Accordingly:

2.1 NATURAL HERITAGE

2.1.1 Natural features and areas shall be protected for the long term.

2.1.2 The diversity and connectivity of natural features in an area, and the long-term *ecological function* and biodiversity of *natural heritage systems*, should be maintained, restored or, where possible, improved, recognizing linkages between and among *natural heritage features and areas*, *surface water features* and *ground water features*.

2.1.3 *Development* and *site alteration* shall not be permitted in:

a) *significant* habitat of *endangered species* and *threatened species*;
b) *significant wetlands* in Ecoregions 5E, 6E and 7E[1]; and
c) *significant coastal wetlands*.

2.1.4 *Development* and *site alteration* shall not be permitted in:

a) *significant wetlands* in the Canadian Shield north of Ecoregions 5E, 6E and 7E[1];
b) *significant woodlands* south and east of the Canadian Shield[2];
c) *significant valleylands* south and east of the Canadian Shield[2];
d) *significant wildlife habitat*; and
e) *significant areas of natural and scientific interest*

unless it has been demonstrated that there will be no *negative impacts* on the natural features or their *ecological functions*.

2.1.5 *Development* and *site alteration* shall not be permitted in *fish habitat* except in accordance with *provincial and federal requirements*.

2.1.6 *Development* and *site alteration* shall not be permitted on *adjacent lands* to the *natural heritage features and areas* identified in policies 2.1.3, 2.1.4 and 2.1.5 unless the *ecological function* of the *adjacent lands* has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that there will be no *negative impacts* on the natural features or on their *ecological functions*.

[1] Ecoregions 5E, 6E and 7E are shown on Figure 1.
[2] Areas south and east of the Canadian Shield are shown on Figure 1.

2.1.7 Nothing in policy 2.1 is intended to limit the ability of existing agricultural uses to continue.

2.2 WATER

2.2.1 Planning authorities shall protect, improve or restore the *quality and quantity of water* by:

a) using the *watershed* as the ecologically meaningful scale for planning;
b) minimizing potential *negative impacts*, including cross-jurisdictional and cross-*watershed* impacts;
c) identifying *surface water features*, *ground water features*, *hydrologic functions* and *natural heritage features and areas* which are necessary for the ecological and hydrological integrity of the *watershed*;
d) implementing necessary restrictions on *development* and *site alteration* to:
   1. protect all municipal drinking water supplies and *designated vulnerable areas*; and
   2. protect, improve or restore *vulnerable* surface and ground water, *sensitive surface water features* and *sensitive ground water features*, and their *hydrologic functions*;
e) maintaining linkages and related functions among *surface water features*, *ground water features*, *hydrologic functions* and *natural heritage features and areas*;
f) promoting efficient and sustainable use of water resources, including practices for water conservation and sustaining water quality; and
g) ensuring stormwater management practices minimize stormwater volumes and contaminant loads, and maintain or increase the extent of vegetative and pervious surfaces.

2.2.2 *Development* and *site alteration* shall be restricted in or near *sensitive surface water features* and *sensitive ground water features* such that these features and their related *hydrologic functions* will be protected, improved or restored.

Mitigative measures and/or alternative development approaches may be required in order to protect, improve or restore *sensitive surface water features, sensitive ground water features,* and their *hydrologic functions*.

2.3 AGRICULTURE

2.3.1 *Prime agricultural areas* shall be protected for long-term use for agriculture.

Prime agricultural areas are areas where *prime agricultural lands* predominate. *Specialty crop areas* shall be given the highest priority for protection, followed by Classes 1, 2 and 3 soils, in this order of priority.

2.3.2 Planning authorities shall designate *specialty crop areas* in accordance with evaluation procedures established by the Province, as amended from time to time.

2.3.3 Permitted Uses

2.3.3.1 In *prime agricultural areas,* permitted uses and activities are: *agricultural uses, secondary uses* and *agriculture-related uses.*

Proposed new *secondary uses* and *agriculture-related uses* shall be compatible with, and shall not hinder, surrounding agricultural operations. These uses shall be limited in scale, and criteria for these uses shall be included in municipal planning documents as recommended by the Province, or based on municipal approaches which achieve the same objective.

2.3.3.2 In *prime agricultural areas*, all types, sizes and intensities of *agricultural uses* and *normal farm practices* shall be promoted and protected in accordance with provincial standards.

2.3.3.3 New land uses, including the creation of lots, and new or expanding livestock facilities shall comply with the *minimum distance separation formulae.*

2.3.4 Lot Creation and Lot Adjustments

2.3.4.1 Lot creation in *prime agricultural areas* is discouraged and may only be permitted for:

a) *agricultural uses*, provided that the lots are of a size appropriate for the type of agricultural use(s) common in the area and are sufficiently large to maintain flexibility for future changes in the type or size of agricultural operations;
b) *agriculture-related uses*, provided that any new lot will be limited to a minimum size needed to accommodate the use and appropriate *sewage and water services*;
c) a *residence surplus to a farming operation* as a result of farm consolidation, provided that the planning authority ensures that new residential dwellings are prohibited on any vacant remnant parcel of farmland created by the severance. The approach used to ensure that no new residential dwellings are permitted on the remnant parcel may be recommended by the Province, or based on municipal approaches which achieve the same objective; and
d) *infrastructure*, where the facility or corridor cannot be accommodated through the use of easements or rights-of-way.

2.3.4.2 Lot adjustments in *prime agricultural areas* may be permitted for *legal or technical reasons*.

2.3.4.3 The creation of new residential lots in *prime agricultural areas* shall not be permitted, except in accordance with policy 2.3.4.1(c).

2.3.5 Removal of Land from Prime Agricultural Areas

2.3.5.1 Planning authorities may only exclude land from *prime agricultural areas* for:

a) expansions of or identification of *settlement areas* in accordance with policy 1.1.3.9;
b) extraction of *minerals*, *petroleum resources* and *mineral aggregate resources*, in accordance with policies 2.4 and 2.5; and
c) limited non-residential uses, provided that:
   1. the land does not comprise a *specialty crop area*;
   2. there is a demonstrated need within the planning horizon provided for in policy 1.1.2 for additional land to be designated to accommodate the proposed use;
   3. there are no reasonable alternative locations which avoid *prime agricultural areas*; and
   4. there are no reasonable alternative locations in *prime agricultural areas* with lower priority agricultural lands.

2.3.5.2 Impacts from any new or expanding non-agricultural uses on surrounding agricultural operations and lands should be mitigated to the extent feasible.

2.4 MINERALS AND PETROLEUM

2.4.1 *Minerals* and *petroleum resources* shall be protected for long-term use.

2.4.2 Protection of Long-Term Resource Supply

2.4.2.1 *Mineral mining operations* and *petroleum resource operations* shall be protected from *development* and activities that would preclude or hinder their expansion or continued use or which would be incompatible for reasons of public health, public safety or environmental impact.

2.4.2.2 In areas adjacent to or in known *mineral deposits* or known *petroleum resources*, and in *significant areas of mineral potential* and *significant areas of petroleum potential*, *development* and activities which would preclude or hinder the establishment of new operations or access to the resources shall only be permitted if:

a) resource use would not be feasible; or
b) the proposed land use or development serves a greater long-term public interest; and
c) issues of public health, public safety and environmental impact are addressed.

2.4.3 Rehabilitation

2.4.3.1 Rehabilitation to accommodate subsequent land uses shall be required after extraction and other related activities have ceased. Progressive rehabilitation should be undertaken wherever feasible.

2.4.4 Extraction in Prime Agricultural Areas

2.4.4.1 Extraction of *minerals* and *petroleum resources* is permitted in *prime agricultural areas*, provided that the site is rehabilitated.

2.5 MINERAL AGGREGATE RESOURCES

2.5.1 *Mineral aggregate resources* shall be protected for long-term use.

2.5.2 Protection of Long-Term Resource Supply

2.5.2.1 As much of the *mineral aggregate resources* as is realistically possible shall be made available as close to markets as possible.

Demonstration of need for *mineral aggregate resources*, including any type of supply/demand analysis, shall not be required, notwithstanding the availability, designation or licensing for extraction of *mineral aggregate resources* locally or elsewhere.

2.5.2.2 Extraction shall be undertaken in a manner which minimizes social and environmental impacts.

2.5.2.3 The conservation of *mineral aggregate resources* should be promoted by making provision for the recovery of these resources, wherever feasible.

2.5.2.4 *Mineral aggregate operations* shall be protected from *development* and activities that would preclude or hinder their expansion or continued use or which would be incompatible for reasons of public health, public safety or environmental impact. Existing *mineral aggregate operations* shall be permitted to continue without the need for official plan amendment, rezoning or development permit under the *Planning Act*. When a license for extraction or operation ceases to exist, policy 2.5.2.5 continues to apply.

2.5.2.5 In areas adjacent to or in known *deposits of mineral aggregate resources*, *development* and activities which would preclude or hinder the establishment of new operations or access to the resources shall only be permitted if:

a) resource use would not be feasible; or
b) the proposed land use or development serves a greater long-term public interest; and
c) issues of public health, public safety and environmental impact are addressed.

2.5.3 Rehabilitation

2.5.3.1 Progressive and final rehabilitation shall be required to accommodate subsequent land uses, to promote land use compatibility, and to recognize the interim nature of extraction. Final rehabilitation shall take surrounding land use and approved land use designations into consideration.

2.5.3.2 In parts of the Province not designated under the *Aggregate Resources Act*, rehabilitation standards that are compatible with those under the Act should be adopted for extraction operations on private lands.

2.5.4 Extraction in Prime Agricultural Areas

2.5.4.1 In *prime agricultural areas*, on *prime agricultural land*, extraction of *mineral aggregate resources* is permitted as an interim use provided that rehabilitation of the site will be carried out so that substantially the same areas and same average soil quality for agriculture are restored.

On these *prime agricultural lands*, complete agricultural rehabilitation is not required if:

a) there is a substantial quantity of *mineral aggregate resources* below the water table warranting extraction, or the depth of planned extraction in a quarry makes restoration of pre-extraction agricultural capability unfeasible;
b) other alternatives have been considered by the applicant and found unsuitable. The consideration of other alternatives shall include resources in areas of Canada Land Inventory Class 4 to 7 soils, resources on lands identified as *designated growth areas*, and resources on *prime agricultural lands* where rehabilitation is feasible. Where no other alternatives are found, *prime agricultural lands* shall be protected in this order of priority: *specialty crop areas*, Canada Land Inventory Classes 1, 2 and 3; and
c) agricultural rehabilitation in remaining areas is maximized.

2.5.5 Wayside Pits and Quarries, Portable Asphalt Plants and Portable Concrete Plants

2.5.5.1 *Wayside pits and quarries*, *portable asphalt plants* and *portable concrete plants* used on public authority contracts shall be permitted, without the need for an official plan amendment, rezoning, or development permit under the *Planning Act* in all areas, except those areas of existing development or particular environmental sensitivity which have been determined to be incompatible with extraction and associated activities.

2.6 CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY

2.6.1 *Significant built heritage resources* and *significant cultural heritage landscapes* shall be *conserved.*

2.6.2 *Development* and *site alteration* shall only be permitted on lands containing *archaeological resources* or *areas of archaeological potential* if the *significant archaeological resources* have been conserved by removal and documentation, or by preservation on site. Where *significant archaeological resources* must be preserved on site, only *development* and *site alteration* which maintain the heritage integrity of the site may be permitted.

2.6.3 *Development* and *site alteration* may be permitted on *adjacent lands* to *protected heritage property* where the proposed *development* and *site alteration* has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that the *heritage attributes* of the *protected heritage property* will be *conserved.*

Mitigative measures and/or alternative development approaches may be required in order to conserve the *heritage attributes* of the *protected heritage property* affected by the adjacent *development* or *site alteration.*

3.0 PROTECTING PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

Ontario's long-term prosperity, environmental health and social well-being depend on reducing the potential for public cost or risk to Ontario's residents from natural or human-made hazards. Development shall be directed away from areas of natural or human-made hazards where there is an unacceptable risk to public health or safety or of property damage.

Accordingly:

3.1 NATURAL HAZARDS

3.1.1 Development shall generally be directed to areas outside of:

a) *hazardous lands* adjacent to the shorelines of the *Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River System* and *large inland lakes* which are impacted by *flooding hazards*, *erosion hazards* and/or *dynamic beach hazards*;
b) *hazardous lands* adjacent to *river, stream and small inland lake systems* which are impacted by *flooding hazards* and/or *erosion hazards*; and
c) *hazardous sites*.

3.1.2 *Development* and *site alteration* shall not be permitted within:

a) the *dynamic beach hazard*;
b) *defined portions of the one hundred year flood level along connecting channels* (the St. Mary's, St. Clair, Detroit, Niagara and St. Lawrence Rivers);
c) areas that would be rendered inaccessible to people and vehicles during times of *flooding hazards*, *erosion hazards* and/or *dynamic beach hazards*, unless it has been demonstrated that the site has safe access appropriate for the nature of the *development* and the natural hazard; and
d) a *floodway* regardless of whether the area of inundation contains high points of land not subject to flooding.

3.1.3 Despite policy 3.1.2, *development* and *site alteration* may be permitted in certain areas identified in policy 3.1.2:

a) in those exceptional situations where a *Special Policy Area* has been approved. The designation of a *Special Policy Area*, and any change or modification to the site-specific policies or boundaries applying to a *Special Policy Area*, must be approved by the Ministers of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Natural Resources prior to the approval authority approving such changes or modifications; or
b) where the *development* is limited to uses which by their nature must locate within the *floodway*, including flood and/or erosion control works or minor additions or passive non-structural uses which do not affect flood flows.

3.1.4 *Development* shall not be permitted to locate in *hazardous lands* and *hazardous sites* where the use is:

a) an institutional use associated with hospitals, nursing homes, pre-school, school nurseries, day care and schools, where there is a threat to the safe evacuation of the sick, the elderly, persons with disabilities or the young during an emergency as a result of flooding, failure of floodproofing measures or protection works, or erosion;
b) an essential emergency service such as that provided by fire, police and ambulance stations and electrical substations, which would be impaired during an emergency as a result of flooding, the failure of floodproofing measures and/or protection works, and/or erosion; and
c) uses associated with the disposal, manufacture, treatment or storage of *hazardous substances*.

3.1.5 Where the two zone concept for *flood plains* is applied, *development* and *site alteration* may be permitted in the *flood fringe*, subject to appropriate floodproofing to the *flooding hazard* elevation or another *flooding hazard* standard approved by the Minister of Natural Resources.

3.1.6 Further to policy 3.1.5, and except as prohibited in policies 3.1.2 and 3.1.4, *development* and *site alteration* may be permitted in those portions of *hazardous lands* and *hazardous sites* where the effects and risk to public safety are minor so as to be managed or mitigated in accordance with provincial standards, as determined by the demonstration and achievement of all of the following:

a) *development* and *site alteration* is carried out in accordance with *floodproofing standards*, *protection works standards*, and *access standards*;
b) vehicles and people have a way of safely entering and exiting the area during times of flooding, erosion and other emergencies;
c) new hazards are not created and existing hazards are not aggravated; and
d) no adverse environmental impacts will result.

3.2 HUMAN-MADE HAZARDS

3.2.1 Development on, abutting or adjacent to lands affected by *mine hazards*; *oil, gas and salt hazards*; or former *mineral mining operations*, *mineral aggregate operations* or *petroleum resource operations* may be permitted only if rehabilitation measures to address and mitigate known or suspected hazards are under-way or have been completed.

3.2.2 Contaminated sites shall be remediated as necessary prior to any activity on the site associated with the proposed use such that there will be no *adverse effects*.

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 This Provincial Policy Statement applies to all applications, matters or proceedings commenced on or after March 1, 2005.

4.2 In accordance with Section 3 of the *Planning Act*, as amended by the *Strong Communities (Planning Amendment) Act, 2004*, a decision of the council of a municipality, a local board, a planning board, a minister of the Crown and a ministry, board, commission or agency of the government, including the Municipal Board, in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter, "shall be consistent with" this Provincial Policy Statement.

Comments, submissions or advice that affect a planning matter that are provided by the council of a municipality, a local board, a planning board, a minister or ministry, board, commission or agency of the government "shall be consistent with" this Provincial Policy Statement.

4.3 This Provincial Policy Statement shall be read in its entirety and all relevant policies are to be applied to each situation.

4.4 In implementing the Provincial Policy Statement, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing may take into account other considerations when making decisions to support strong communities, a clean and healthy environment and the economic vitality of the Province.

4.5 The official plan is the most important vehicle for implementation of this Provincial Policy Statement.

Comprehensive, integrated and long-term planning is best achieved through municipal official plans. Municipal official plans shall identify provincial interests and set out appropriate land use designations and policies. Municipal official plans should also coordinate cross-boundary matters to complement the actions of other planning authorities and promote mutually beneficial solutions.

Municipal official plans shall provide clear, reasonable and attainable policies to protect provincial interests and direct development to suitable areas.

In order to protect provincial interests, planning authorities shall keep their official plans up-to-date with this Provincial Policy Statement. The policies of this Provincial Policy Statement continue to apply after adoption and approval of a municipal official plan.

4.6 The policies of this Provincial Policy Statement represent minimum standards. This Provincial Policy Statement does not prevent planning authorities and decision-makers from going beyond the minimum standards established in specific policies, unless doing so would conflict with any policy of this Provincial Policy Statement.

4.7 A wide range of legislation and regulations may apply to decisions with respect to *Planning Act* applications. In some cases, a *Planning Act* proposal may also require approval under other legislation or regulation.

4.8 In addition to land use approvals under the *Planning Act*, *infrastructure* may also require approval under other legislation and regulations, including the *Environmental Assessment Act*; the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 1992*; the *Environmental Protection Act*; the *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998*; the *Ontario Water Resources Act*; the *Conservation Authorities Act*; the *Ontario Heritage Act*; and the *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002*. An environmental assessment process may be applied to new infrastructure and modifications to existing infrastructure under applicable legislation.

4.9 *Provincial plans* shall take precedence over policies in this Provincial Policy Statement to the extent of any conflict. Examples of these are plans created under the *Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act* and the *Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act, 2001*.

4.10 The Province, in consultation with municipalities, other public bodies and stakeholders shall identify performance indicators for measuring the effectiveness of some or all of the policies. The Province shall monitor their implementation, including reviewing performance indicators concurrent with any review of this Provincial Policy Statement.

4.11 Municipalities are encouraged to establish performance indicators to monitor the implementation of the policies in their official plans.

5.0 FIGURE 1

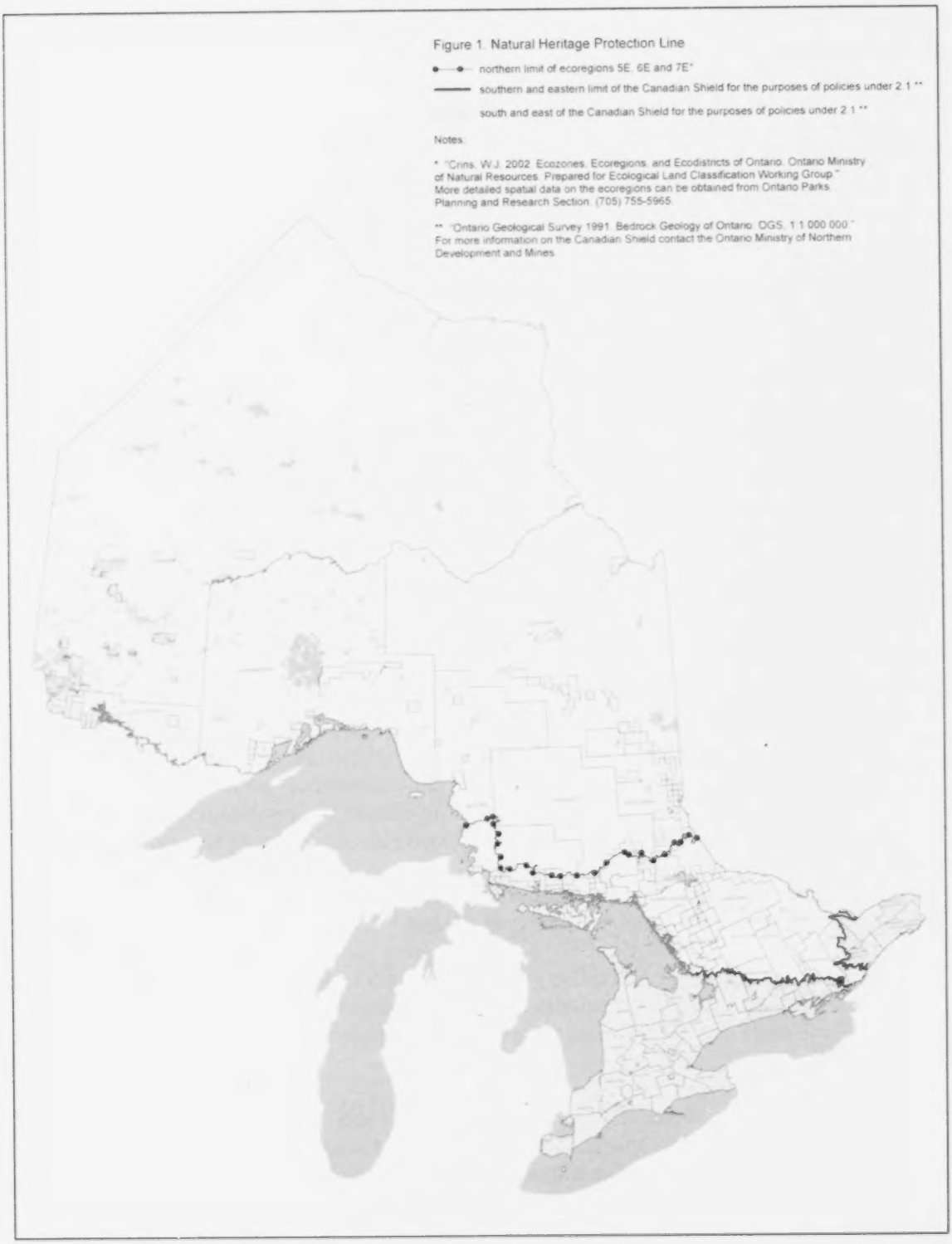
Figure 1. Natural Heritage Protection Line
northern limit of ecoregions 5E, 6E and 7E*
southern and eastern limit of the Canadian Shield for the purposes of policies under 2.1 **
south and east of the Canadian Shield for the purposes of policies under 2.1 **
Notes:
* "Crins, W.J. 2002. Ecozones, Ecoregions, and Ecodistricts of Ontario. Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. Prepared for Ecological Land Classification Working Group." More detailed spatial data on the ecoregions can be obtained from Ontario Parks, Planning and Research Section, (705) 755-5965.
** "Ontario Geological Survey 1991. Bedrock Geology of Ontario. OGS, 1:1,000,000." For more information on the Canadian Shield contact the Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines.

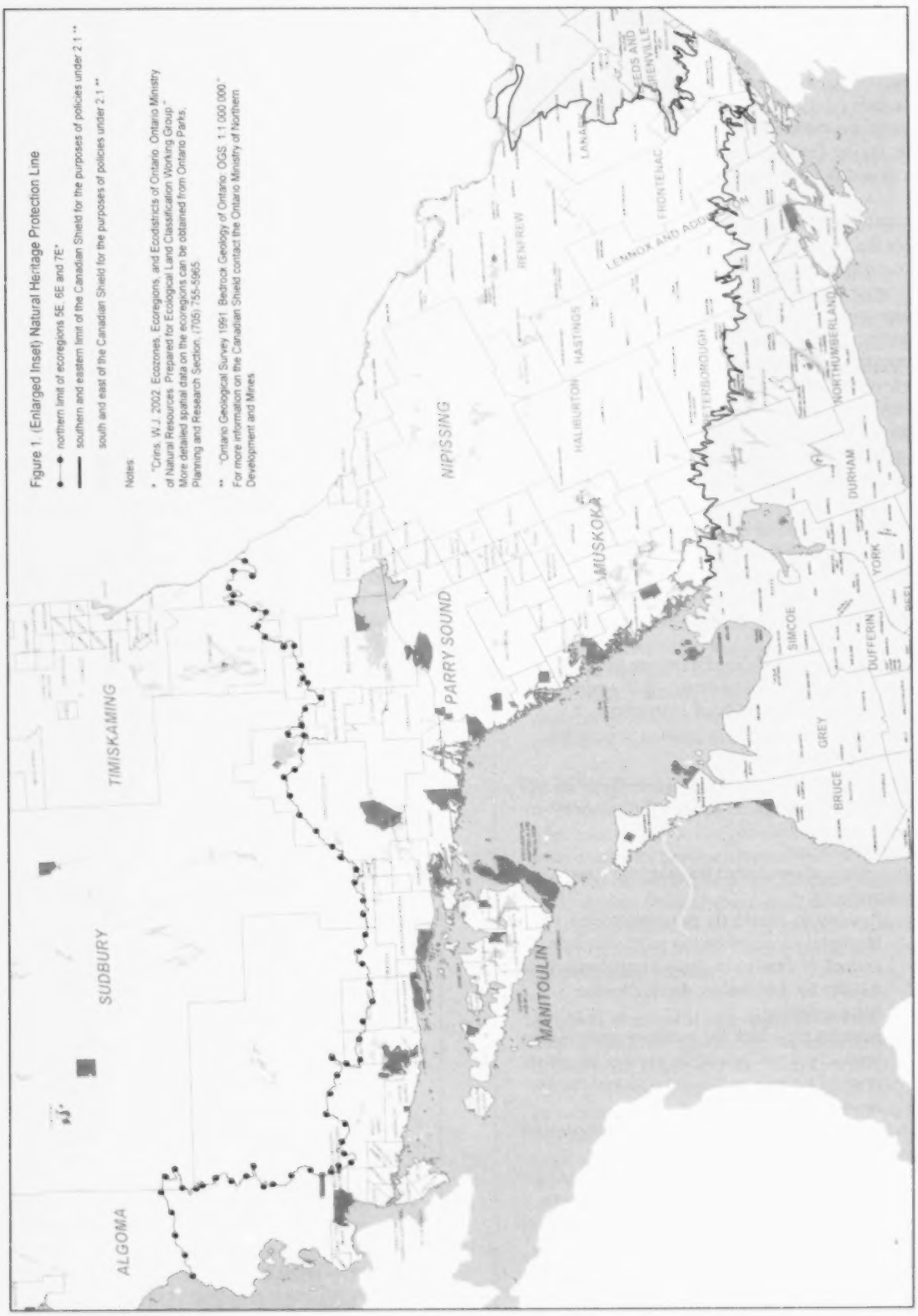
Figure 1 (Enlarged Inset) Natural Heritage Protection Line
northern limit of ecoregions 5E, 6E and 7E*
southern and eastern limit of the Canadian Shield for the purposes of policies under 2.1 **
south and east of the Canadian Shield for the purposes of policies under 2.1 **
Notes
* "Crins, W.J. 2002. Ecozones, Ecoregions, and Ecodistricts of Ontario. Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. Prepared for Ecological Land Classification Working Group." More detailed spatial data on the ecoregions can be obtained from Ontario Parks, Planning and Research Section, (705) 755-5965.
** "Ontario Geological Survey 1991. Bedrock Geology of Ontario. OGS. 1:1 000 000." For more information on the Canadian Shield contact the Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines.
ALGOMA
SUDBURY
TIMISKAMING
NIPISSING
PARRY SOUND
MANITOULIN
MUSKOKA
HALIBURTON
HASTINGS
RENFREW
LENNOX AND ADDINGTON
FRONTENAC
PETERBOROUGH
NORTHUMBERLAND
DURHAM
YORK
SIMCOE
DUFFERIN
GREY
BRUCE

6.0 DEFINITIONS

Access standards: means methods or procedures to ensure safe vehicular and pedestrian movement, and access for the maintenance and repair of protection works, during times of *flooding hazards*, *erosion hazards* and/or *other water-related hazards*.

Adjacent lands: means

a) for the purposes of policy 2.1, those lands contiguous to a specific *natural heritage feature or area* where it is likely that *development* or *site alteration* would have a *negative impact* on the feature or area. The extent of the *adjacent lands* may be recommended by the Province or based on municipal approaches which achieve the same objectives; and
b) for the purposes of policy 2.6.3, those lands contiguous to a *protected heritage property* or as otherwise defined in the municipal official plan.

Adverse effects: as defined in the *Environmental Protection Act*, means one or more of:

a) impairment of the quality of the natural environment for any use that can be made of it;
b) injury or damage to property or plant or animal life;
c) harm or material discomfort to any person;
d) an adverse effect on the health of any person;
e) impairment of the safety of any person;
f) rendering any property or plant or animal life unfit for human use;
g) loss of enjoyment of normal use of property; and
h) interference with normal conduct of business.

Affordable: means

a) in the case of ownership housing, the least expensive of:
    1. housing for which the purchase price results in annual accommodation costs which do not exceed 30 percent of gross annual household income for *low and moderate income households*; or
    2. housing for which the purchase price is at least 10 percent below the average purchase price of a resale unit in the *regional market area*;
b) in the case of rental housing, the least expensive of:
    1. a unit for which the rent does not exceed 30 percent of gross annual household income for *low and moderate income households*; or
    2. a unit for which the rent is at or below the average market rent of a unit in the *regional market area*.

Agricultural uses: means the growing of crops, including nursery and horticultural crops; raising of livestock; raising of other animals for food, fur or fibre, including poultry and fish; aquaculture; apiaries; agro-forestry; maple syrup production; and associated on-farm buildings and structures, including accommodation for full-time farm labour when the size and nature of the operation requires additional employment.

Agriculture-related uses: means those farm-related commercial and farm-related industrial uses that are small scale and directly related to the farm operation and are required in close proximity to the farm operation.

Airports: means all Ontario airports, including designated lands for future airports, with Noise Exposure Forecast (NEF)/Noise Exposure Projection (NEP) mapping.

Alternative energy systems: means sources of energy or energy conversion processes that significantly reduce the amount of harmful emissions to the environment (air, earth and water) when compared to conventional energy systems.

Archaeological resources: includes artifacts, archaeological sites and marine archaeological sites. The identification and evaluation of such resources are based upon archaeological fieldwork undertaken in accordance with the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Areas of archaeological potential: means areas with the likelihood to contain *archaeological resources*. Criteria for determining archaeological potential are established by the Province, but municipal approaches which achieve the same objectives may also be used. Archaeological potential is confirmed through archaeological fieldwork undertaken in accordance with the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Areas of mineral potential: means areas favourable to the discovery of *mineral deposits* due to geology, the presence of known *mineral deposits* or other technical evidence.

Areas of natural and scientific interest (ANSI): means areas of land and water containing natural landscapes or features that have been identified as having life science or earth science values related to protection, scientific study or education.

Areas of petroleum potential: means areas favourable to the discovery of *petroleum resources* due to geology, the presence of known *petroleum resources* or other technical evidence.

Brownfield sites: means undeveloped or previously developed properties that may be contaminated. They are usually, but not exclusively, former industrial or commercial properties that may be underutilized, derelict or vacant.

Built heritage resources: means one or more *significant* buildings, structures, monuments, installations or remains associated with architectural, cultural, social, political, economic or military history and identified as being important to a community. These resources may be identified through designation or heritage conservation easement under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, or listed by local, provincial or federal jurisdictions.

Coastal wetland: means

a) any *wetland* that is located on one of the Great Lakes or their connecting channels (Lake St. Clair, St. Mary's, St. Clair, Detroit, Niagara and St. Lawrence Rivers); or
b) any other *wetland* that is on a tributary to any of the above-specified water bodies and lies, either wholly or in part, downstream of a line located 2 kilometres upstream of the 1:100 year floodline (plus wave run-up) of the large water body to which the tributary is connected.

Comprehensive review: means

a) for the purposes of policies 1.1.3.9 and 1.3.2, an official plan review which is initiated by a planning authority, or an official plan amendment which is initiated or adopted by a planning authority, which:
   1. is based on a review of population and growth projections and which reflect projections and allocations by upper-tier municipalities and *provincial plans*, where applicable; considers alternative directions for growth; and determines how best to accommodate this growth while protecting provincial interests;
   2. utilizes opportunities to accommodate projected growth through *intensification* and *redevelopment*;
   3. confirms that the lands to be developed do not comprise *specialty crop areas* in accordance with policy 2.3.2;
   4. is integrated with planning for *infrastructure* and *public service facilities*; and
   5. considers cross-jurisdictional issues.
b) for the purposes of policy 1.1.5, means a review undertaken by a planning authority or comparable body which:
   1. addresses long-term population projections, *infrastructure* requirements and related matters;
   2. confirms that the lands to be developed do not comprise *specialty crop areas* in accordance with policy 2.3.2; and
   3. considers cross-jurisdictional issues.

Conserved: means the identification, protection, use and/or management of cultural heritage and archaeological resources in such a way that their heritage values, attributes and integrity are retained. This may be addressed through a conservation plan or heritage impact assessment.

Cultural heritage landscape: means a defined geographical area of heritage significance which has been modified by human activities and is valued by a community. It involves a grouping(s) of individual heritage features such as structures, spaces, archaeological sites and natural elements, which together form a significant type of heritage form, distinctive from that of its constituent elements or parts. Examples may include, but are not limited to, heritage conservation districts designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*; and villages, parks, gardens, battlefields, mainstreets and neighbourhoods, cemeteries, trailways and industrial complexes of cultural heritage value.

Defined portions of the one hundred year flood level along connecting channels: means those areas which are critical to the conveyance of the flows associated with the *one hundred year flood level* along the St. Mary's, St. Clair, Detroit, Niagara and St. Lawrence Rivers, where *development* or *site alteration* will create *flooding hazards*, cause updrift and/or downdrift impacts and/or cause adverse environmental impacts.

Deposits of mineral aggregate resources: means an area of identified *mineral aggregate resources*, as delineated in Aggregate Resource Inventory Papers or comprehensive studies prepared using evaluation procedures established by the Province for surficial and bedrock resources, as amended from time to time, that has a sufficient quantity and quality to warrant present or future extraction.

Designated and available: for the purposes of policy 1.4.1(a), means lands designated in the official plan for urban residential use. For municipalities where more detailed official plan policies (e.g.,

secondary plans) are required before development applications can be considered for approval, only lands that have commenced the more detailed planning process are considered to be designated for the purposes of this definition.

Designated growth areas: means lands within *settlement areas* designated in an official plan for growth over the long-term planning horizon provided in policy 1.1.2, but which have not yet been fully developed. *Designated growth areas* include lands which are *designated and available* for residential growth in accordance with policy 1.4.1(a), as well as lands required for employment and other uses.

Designated vulnerable area: means areas defined as vulnerable, in accordance with provincial standards, by virtue of their importance as a drinking water source that may be impacted by activities or events.

Development: means the creation of a new lot, a change in land use, or the construction of buildings and structures, requiring approval under the *Planning Act*, but does not include:

a) activities that create or maintain *infrastructure* authorized under an environmental assessment process;
b) works subject to the *Drainage Act*; or
c) for the purposes of policy 2.1.3(b), underground or surface mining of *minerals* or advanced exploration on mining lands in *significant areas of mineral potential* in Ecoregion 5E, where advanced exploration has the same meaning as under the *Mining Act*. Instead, those matters shall be subject to policy 2.1.4(a).

Dynamic beach hazard: means areas of inherently unstable accumulations of shoreline sediments along the *Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River System* and *large inland lakes*, as identified by provincial standards, as amended from time to time. The *dynamic beach hazard* limit consists of the *flooding hazard* limit plus a dynamic beach allowance.

Ecological function: means the natural processes, products or services that living and non-living environments provide or perform within or between species, ecosystems and landscapes. These may include biological, physical and socio-economic interactions.

Employment area: means those areas designated in an official plan for clusters of business and economic activities including, but not limited to, manufacturing, warehousing, offices, and associated retail and ancillary facilities.

Endangered species: means a species that is listed or categorized as an "Endangered Species" on the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources' official species at risk list, as updated and amended from time to time.

Erosion hazard: means the loss of land, due to human or natural processes, that poses a threat to life and property. The *erosion hazard* limit is determined using considerations that include the 100 year erosion rate (the average annual rate of recession extended over an one hundred year time span), an allowance for slope stability, and an erosion/erosion access allowance.

Fish: means fish, which as defined in S.2 of the *Fisheries Act*, c. F-14, as amended, includes fish, shellfish, crustaceans, and marine animals, at all stages of their life cycles.

Fish habitat: as defined in the *Fisheries Act*, c. F-14, means spawning grounds and nursery, rearing, food supply, and migration areas on which *fish* depend directly or indirectly in order to carry out their life processes.

Flood fringe: for *river, stream and small inland lake systems*, means the outer portion of the *flood plain* between the *floodway* and the *flooding hazard* limit. Depths and velocities of flooding are generally less severe in the flood fringe than those experienced in the *floodway*.

Flood plain: for *river stream, and small inland lake systems*, means the area, usually low lands adjoining a watercourse, which has been or may be subject to *flooding hazards*.

Flooding hazard: means the inundation, under the conditions specified below, of areas adjacent to a shoreline or a river or stream system and not ordinarily covered by water:

a) Along the shorelines of the *Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River System* and *large inland lakes*, the *flooding hazard* limit is based on the *one hundred year flood level* plus an allowance for *wave uprush* and *other water-related hazards*;
b) Along *river, stream and small inland lake systems*, the *flooding hazard* limit is the greater of:
    1. the flood resulting from the rainfall actually experienced during a major storm such as the Hurricane Hazel storm (1954) or the

Timmins storm (1961), transposed over a specific watershed and combined with the local conditions, where evidence suggests that the storm event could have potentially occurred over watersheds in the general area;

2. the *one hundred year flood*; and
3. a flood which is greater than 1. or 2. which was actually experienced in a particular watershed or portion thereof as a result of ice jams and which has been approved as the standard for that specific area by the Minister of Natural Resources;

except where the use of the *one hundred year flood* or the actually experienced event has been approved by the Minister of Natural Resources as the standard for a specific watershed (where the past history of flooding supports the lowering of the standard).

Floodproofing standard: means the combination of measures incorporated into the basic design and/or construction of buildings, structures, or properties to reduce or eliminate *flooding hazards*, *wave uprush* and *other water-related hazards* along the shorelines of the *Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River System* and *large inland lakes*, and *flooding hazards* along *river, stream* and *small inland lake systems*.

Floodway: for *river, stream and small inland lake systems*, means the portion of the *flood plain* where *development* and *site alteration* would cause a danger to public health and safety or property damage.

Where the one zone concept is applied, the *floodway* is the entire contiguous *flood plain*.

Where the two zone concept is applied, the *floodway* is the contiguous inner portion of the *flood plain*, representing that area required for the safe passage of flood flow and/or that area where flood depths and/or velocities are considered to be such that they pose a potential threat to life and/or property damage. Where the two zone concept applies, the outer portion of the *flood plain* is called the *flood fringe*.

Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River System: means the major water system consisting of Lakes Superior, Huron, St. Clair, Erie and Ontario and their connecting channels, and the St. Lawrence River within the boundaries of the Province of Ontario.

Ground water feature: refers to water-related features in the earth's subsurface, including recharge/discharge areas, water tables, aquifers and unsaturated zones that can be defined by surface and subsurface hydrogeologic investigations.

Hazardous lands: means property or lands that could be unsafe for development due to naturally occurring processes. Along the shorelines of the *Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River System*, this means the land, including that covered by water, between the international boundary, where applicable, and the furthest landward limit of the *flooding hazard*, *erosion hazard* or *dynamic beach hazard* limits. Along the shorelines of *large inland lakes*, this means the land, including that covered by water, between a defined offshore distance or depth and the furthest landward limit of the *flooding hazard*, *erosion hazard* or *dynamic beach hazard* limits. Along *river, stream and small inland lake systems*, this means the land, including that covered by water, to the furthest landward limit of the *flooding hazard* or *erosion hazard* limits.

Hazardous sites: means property or lands that could be unsafe for *development* and *site alteration* due to naturally occurring hazards. These may include unstable soils (sensitive marine clays [leda], organic soils) or unstable bedrock (karst topography).

Hazardous substances: means substances which, individually, or in combination with other substances, are normally considered to pose a danger to public health, safety and the environment. These substances generally include a wide array of materials that are toxic, ignitable, corrosive, reactive, radioactive or pathological.

Heritage attributes: means the principal features, characteristics, context and appearance that contribute to the cultural heritage significance of a *protected heritage property*.

Hydrologic function: means the functions of the hydrological cycle that include the occurrence, circulation, distribution and chemical and physical properties of water on the surface of the land, in the soil and underlying rocks, and in the atmosphere, and water's interaction with the environment including its relation to living things.

Individual on-site sewage services: means individual, autonomous sewage disposal systems within the meaning of s.8.1.2, O.Reg. 403/97, under the *Building Code Act, 1992* that are owned, operated and managed by the owner of the property upon which the system is located.

Individual on-site water services: means individual, autonomous water supply systems that are owned, operated and managed by the owner of the property upon which the system is located.

Infrastructure: means physical structures (facilities and corridors) that form the foundation for development. *Infrastructure* includes: sewage and water systems, septage treatment systems, waste management systems, electric power generation and transmission, communications/telecommunications, transit and transportation corridors and facilities, oil and gas pipelines and associated facilities.

Intensification: means the development of a property, site or area at a higher density than currently exists through:

a) *redevelopment*, including the reuse of *brownfield sites*;
b) the development of vacant and/or underutilized lots within previously developed areas;
c) infill development; and
d) the expansion or conversion of existing buildings.

Large inland lakes: means those waterbodies having a surface area of equal to or greater than 100 square kilometres where there is not a measurable or predictable response to a single runoff event.

Legal or technical reasons: for the purposes of policy 2.3.4.2, means severances for purposes such as easements, corrections of deeds, quit claims, and minor boundary adjustments, which do not result in the creation of a new lot.

Low and moderate income households: means

a) in the case of ownership housing, households with incomes in the lowest 60 percent of the income distribution for the *regional market area*; or
b) in the case of rental housing, households with incomes in the lowest 60 percent of the income distribution for renter households for the *regional market area*.

Mine hazard: means any feature of a mine as defined under the *Mining Act*, or any related disturbance of the ground that has not been rehabilitated.

Minerals: means metallic minerals and non-metallic minerals as herein defined, but does not include *mineral aggregate resources* or *petroleum resources*.

Metallic minerals means those minerals from which metals (e.g. copper, nickel, gold) are derived.

Non-metallic minerals means those minerals that are of value for intrinsic properties of the minerals themselves and not as a source of metal. They are generally synonymous with industrial minerals (e.g. asbestos, graphite, kyanite, mica, nepheline syenite, salt, talc, and wollastonite).

Mineral aggregate operation: means

a) lands under license or permit, other than for *wayside pits and quarries*, issued in accordance with the *Aggregate Resources Act*, or successors thereto;
b) for lands not designated under the *Aggregate Resources Act*, established pits and quarries that are not in contravention of municipal zoning by-laws and including adjacent land under agreement with or owned by the operator, to permit continuation of the operation; and
c) associated facilities used in extraction, transport, beneficiation, processing or recycling of *mineral aggregate resources* and derived products such as asphalt and concrete, or the production of secondary related products.

Mineral aggregate resources: means gravel, sand, clay, earth, shale, stone, limestone, dolostone, sandstone, marble, granite, rock or other material prescribed under the *Aggregate Resources Act* suitable for construction, industrial, manufacturing and maintenance purposes but does not include metallic ores, asbestos, graphite, kyanite, mica, nepheline syenite, salt, talc, wollastonite, mine tailings or other material prescribed under the *Mining Act*.

Mineral deposits: means areas of identified *minerals* that have sufficient quantity and quality based on specific geological evidence to warrant present or future extraction.

Mineral mining operation: means mining operations and associated facilities, or, past producing mines with remaining mineral development potential that have not been permanently rehabilitated to another use.

Minimum distance separation formulae: means formulae developed by the Province to separate uses so as to reduce incompatibility concerns about odour from livestock facilities.

Multi-modal transportation system: means a transportation system which may include several

forms of transportation such as automobiles, walking, trucks, cycling, buses, rapid transit, rail (such as commuter and freight), air and marine.

Municipal sewage services: means a sewage works within the meaning of Section 1 of the *Ontario Water Resources Act* that is owned or operated by a municipality.

Municipal water services: means a municipal drinking-water system within the meaning of Section 2 of the *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002*.

Natural heritage features and areas: means features and areas, including *significant wetlands*, *significant coastal wetlands*, *fish habitat*, *significant woodlands* south and east of the Canadian Shield, *significant valleylands* south and east of the Canadian Shield, *significant* habitat of *endangered species* and *threatened species*, *significant wildlife habitat*, and *significant areas of natural and scientific interest*, which are important for their environmental and social values as a legacy of the natural landscapes of an area.

Natural heritage system: means a system made up of *natural heritage features and areas*, linked by natural corridors which are necessary to maintain biological and geological diversity, natural functions, viable populations of indigenous species and ecosystems. These systems can include lands that have been restored and areas with the potential to be restored to a natural state.

Negative impacts: means

a) in regard to policy 2.2, degradation to the *quality and quantity of water*, *sensitive surface water features* and *sensitive ground water features*, and their related *hydrologic functions*, due to single, multiple or successive *development* or *site alteration* activities;
b) in regard to *fish habitat*, the harmful alteration, disruption or destruction of *fish habitat*, except where, in conjunction with the appropriate authorities, it has been authorized under the *Fisheries Act*, using the guiding principle of no net loss of productive capacity; and
c) in regard to other *natural heritage features and areas*, degradation that threatens the health and integrity of the natural features or *ecological functions* for which an area is identified due to single, multiple or successive *development* or *site alteration* activities.

Normal farm practices: means a practice, as defined in the *Farming and Food Production Protection Act, 1998*, that is conducted in a manner consistent with proper and acceptable customs and standards as established and followed by similar agricultural operations under similar circumstances; or makes use of innovative technology in a manner consistent with proper advanced farm management practices. Normal farm practices shall be consistent with the *Nutrient Management Act, 2002* and regulations made under that Act.

Oil, gas and salt hazards: means any feature of a well or work as defined under the *Oil, Gas and Salt Resources Act*, or any related disturbance of the ground that has not been rehabilitated.

One hundred year flood: for *river, stream and small inland lake systems*, means that flood, based on an analysis of precipitation, snow melt, or a combination thereof, having a return period of 100 years on average, or having a 1% chance of occurring or being exceeded in any given year.

One hundred year flood level: means

a) for the shorelines of the Great Lakes, the peak instantaneous stillwater level, resulting from combinations of mean monthly lake levels and wind setups, which has a 1% chance of being equalled or exceeded in any given year;
b) in the connecting channels (St. Mary's, St. Clair, Detroit, Niagara and St. Lawrence Rivers), the peak instantaneous stillwater level which has a 1% chance of being equalled or exceeded in any given year; and
c) for large inland lakes, lake levels and wind setups that have a 1% chance of being equalled or exceeded in any given year, except that, where sufficient water level records do not exist, the one hundred year flood level is based on the highest known water level and wind setups.

Other water-related hazards: means water-associated phenomena other than *flooding hazards* and *wave uprush* which act on shorelines. This includes, but is not limited to ship-generated waves, ice piling and ice jamming.

Partial services: means

a) *municipal sewage services* or *private communal sewage services* and *individual on-site water services*; or
b) *municipal water services* or *private communal water services* and *individual on-site sewage services*.

Petroleum resource operations: means oil, gas and brine wells, and associated facilities, oil field brine

disposal wells and associated facilities, and facilities for the underground storage of natural gas and other hydrocarbons.

Petroleum resources: means oil, gas, and brine resources which have been identified through exploration and verified by preliminary drilling or other forms of investigation. This may include sites of former operations where resources are still present or former sites that may be converted to underground storage for natural gas or other hydrocarbons.

Planned corridors: means corridors identified through *provincial plans* or preferred alignment(s) determined through the *Environmental Assessment Act* process which are required to meet projected needs.

Portable asphalt plant: means a facility

a) with equipment designed to heat and dry aggregate and to mix aggregate with bituminous asphalt to produce asphalt paving material, and includes stockpiling and storage of bulk materials used in the process; and
b) which is not of permanent construction, but which is to be dismantled at the completion of the construction project.

Portable concrete plant: means a building or structure

a) with equipment designed to mix cementing materials, aggregate, water and admixtures to produce concrete, and includes stockpiling and storage of bulk materials used in the process; and
b) which is not of permanent construction, but which is designed to be dismantled at the completion of the construction project.

Prime agricultural area: means areas where *prime agricultural lands* predominate.' This includes: areas of *prime agricultural lands* and associated Canada Land Inventory Class 4-7 soils; and additional areas where there is a local concentration of farms which exhibit characteristics of ongoing agriculture. *Prime agricultural areas* may be identified by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food using evaluation procedures established by the Province as amended from time to time, or may also be identified through an alternative agricultural land evaluation system approved by the Province.

Prime agricultural land: means land that includes *specialty crop areas* and/or Canada Land Inventory Classes 1, 2, and 3 soils, in this order of priority for protection.

Private communal sewage services: means a sewage works within the meaning of Section 1 of the *Ontario Water Resources Act* that serves six or more lots or private residences and is not owned by a municipality.

Private communal water services: means a non-municipal drinking-water system within the meaning of Section 2 of the *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002* that serves six or more lots or private residences.

Protected heritage property: means real property designated under Parts IV, V or VI of the *Ontario Heritage Act*; heritage conservation easement property under Parts II or IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*; and property that is the subject of a covenant or agreement between the owner of a property and a conservation body or level of government, registered on title and executed with the primary purpose of preserving, conserving and maintaining a cultural heritage feature or resource, or preventing its destruction, demolition or loss.

Protection works standards: means the combination of non-structural or structural works and allowances for slope stability and flooding/erosion to reduce the damage caused by *flooding hazards*, *erosion hazards* and *other water-related hazards*, and to allow access for their maintenance and repair.

Provincial and federal requirements: means

a) in regard to policy 1.8.3, legislation and policies administered by the federal or provincial governments for the purpose of protecting the environment from potential impacts associated with energy facilities and ensuring that the necessary approvals are obtained; and
b) in regard to policy 2.1.5, legislation and policies administered by the federal or provincial governments for the purpose of the protection of *fish* and *fish habitat*, and related, scientifically established standards such as water quality criteria for protecting lake trout populations.

Provincial plan: means a plan approved by the Lieutenant Governor in Council or the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, but does not include municipal official plans.

Public service facilities: means land, buildings and structures for the provision of programs and services provided or subsidized by a government or other body, such as social assistance, recreation, police and fire protection, health and educational programs, and cultural services. *Public service facilities* do not include *infrastructure*.

Quality and quantity of water: is measured by indicators such as minimum base flow, depth to water table, aquifer pressure, oxygen levels, suspended solids, temperature, bacteria, nutrients and hazardous contaminants, and hydrologic regime.

Recreation: means leisure time activity undertaken in built or natural settings for purposes of physical activity, health benefits, sport participation and skill development, personal enjoyment, positive social interaction and the achievement of human potential.

Redevelopment: means the creation of new units, uses or lots on previously developed land in existing communities, including *brownfield sites*.

Regional market area: refers to an area, generally broader than a lower-tier municipality, that has a high degree of social and economic interaction. In southern Ontario, the upper or single-tier municipality will normally serve as the *regional market area*. Where a *regional market area* extends significantly beyond upper or single-tier boundaries, it may include a combination of upper, single and/or lower-tier municipalities.

Renewable energy systems: means the production of electrical power from an energy source that is renewed by natural processes including, but not limited to, wind, water, a biomass resource or product, or solar and geothermal energy.

Reserve sewage system capacity: means design or planned capacity in a centralized waste water treatment facility which is not yet committed to existing or approved development. For the purposes of policy 1.6.4.1(e), reserve capacity for *private communal sewage services* and *individual on-site sewage services* is considered sufficient if the hauled sewage from the development can be treated or disposed of at sites approved under the *Environmental Protection Act* or the *Ontario Water Resources Act*, but not by land-applying untreated, hauled sewage.

Reserve water system capacity: means design or planned capacity in a centralized water treatment facility which is not yet committed to existing or approved development.

Residence surplus to a farming operation: means an existing farm residence that is rendered surplus as a result of farm consolidation (the acquisition of additional farm parcels to be operated as one farm operation).

Residential intensification: means intensification of a property, site or area which results in a net increase in residential units or accommodation and includes:

a) redevelopment, including the redevelopment of *brownfield sites*;
b) the development of vacant or underutilized lots within previously developed areas;
c) infill development;
d) the conversion or expansion of existing industrial, commercial and institutional buildings for residential use; and
e) the conversion or expansion of existing residential buildings to create new residential units or accommodation, including accessory apartments, secondary suites and rooming houses.

River, stream and small inland lake systems: means all watercourses, rivers, streams, and small inland lakes or waterbodies that have a measurable or predictable response to a single runoff event.

Rural areas: means lands in the rural area which are located outside *settlement areas* and which are outside *prime agricultural areas*.

Secondary uses: means uses secondary to the principal use of the property, including but not limited to, home occupations, home industries, and uses that produce value-added agricultural products from the farm operation on the property.

Sensitive: in regard to *surface water features* and *ground water features*, means areas that are particularly susceptible to impacts from activities or events including, but not limited to, water withdrawals, and additions of pollutants.

Sensitive land uses: means buildings, amenity areas, or outdoor spaces where routine or normal activities occurring at reasonably expected times would experience one or more *adverse effects* from contaminant discharges generated by a nearby major facility. *Sensitive land uses* may be a part of the natural or built environment. Examples may include, but are not limited to: residences, day care centres, and educational and health facilities.

Settlement areas: means urban areas and rural settlement areas within municipalities (such as cities, towns, villages and hamlets) that are:

a) built up areas where development is concentrated and which have a mix of land uses; and
b) lands which have been designated in an official plan for development over the long term planning horizon provided for in policy 1.1.2. In

cases where land in *designated growth areas* is not available, the *settlement area* may be no larger than the area where development is concentrated.

Sewage and water services: includes *municipal sewage services* and *municipal water services*, *private communal sewage services* and *private communal water services*, *individual on-site sewage services* and *individual on-site water services*, and *partial services*.

Significant: means

a) in regard to *wetlands*, *coastal wetlands* and *areas of natural and scientific interest*, an area identified as provincially significant by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources using evaluation procedures established by the Province, as amended from time to time;

b) in regard to the habitat of *endangered species* and *threatened species*, means the habitat, as approved by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, that is necessary for the maintenance, survival, and/or the recovery of naturally occurring or reintroduced populations of *endangered species* or *threatened species*, and where those areas of occurrence are occupied or habitually occupied by the species during all or any part(s) of its life cycle;

c) in regard to *woodlands*, an area which is ecologically important in terms of features such as species composition, age of trees and stand history; functionally important due to its contribution to the broader landscape because of its location, size or due to the amount of forest cover in the planning area; or economically important due to site quality, species composition, or past management history;

d) in regard to other features and areas in policy 2.1, ecologically important in terms of features, functions, representation or amount, and contributing to the quality and diversity of an identifiable geographic area or *natural heritage system*;

e) in regard to *mineral* potential, means an area identified as provincially significant through comprehensive studies prepared using evaluation procedures established by the Province, as amended from time to time, such as the Provincially Significant Mineral Potential Index;

f) in regard to potential for *petroleum resources*, means an area identified as provincially significant through comprehensive studies prepared using evaluation procedures established by the Province, as amended from time to time; and

g) in regard to cultural heritage and archaeology, resources that are valued for the important contribution they make to our understanding of the history of a place, an event, or a people.

Criteria for determining significance for the resources identified in sections (c)-(g) are recommended by the Province, but municipal approaches that achieve or exceed the same objective may also be used.

While some significant resources may already be identified and inventoried by official sources, the significance of others can only be determined after evaluation.

Site alteration: means activities, such as grading, excavation and the placement of fill that would change the landform and natural vegetative characteristics of a site.

For the purposes of policy 2.1.3(b), *site alteration* does not include underground or surface mining of *minerals* or advanced exploration on mining lands in *significant areas of mineral potential* in Ecoregion 5E, where advanced exploration has the same meaning as in the *Mining Act*. Instead, those matters shall be subject to policy 2.1.4(a).

Special needs: means any housing, including dedicated facilities, in whole or in part, that is used by people who have specific needs beyond economic needs, including but not limited to, needs such as mobility requirements or support functions required for daily living. Examples of *special needs* housing may include, but are not limited to, housing for persons with disabilities such as physical, sensory or mental health disabilities, and housing for the elderly.

Special policy area: means an area within a community that has historically existed in the *flood plain* and where site-specific policies, approved by both the Ministers of Natural Resources and Municipal Affairs and Housing, are intended to provide for the continued viability of existing uses (which are generally on a small scale) and address the significant social and economic hardships to the community that would result from strict adherence to provincial policies concerning *development*. The criteria and procedures for approval are established by the Province.

A *Special Policy Area* is not intended to allow for new or intensified development and site alteration, if a community has feasible opportunities for development outside the *flood plain*.

Specialty crop area: means areas designated using evaluation procedures established by the province, as amended from time to time, where specialty crops such as tender fruits (peaches, cherries, plums), grapes, other fruit crops, vegetable crops, greenhouse crops, and crops from agriculturally developed organic soil lands are predominantly grown, usually resulting from:

a) soils that have suitability to produce specialty crops, or lands that are subject to special climatic conditions, or a combination of both; and/or
b) a combination of farmers skilled in the production of specialty crops, and of capital investment in related facilities and services to produce, store, or process specialty crops.

Surface water feature: refers to water-related features on the earth's surface, including headwaters, rivers, stream channels, inland lakes, seepage areas, recharge/discharge areas, springs, wetlands, and associated riparian lands that can be defined by their soil moisture, soil type, vegetation or topographic characteristics.

Threatened species: means a species that is listed or categorized as a "Threatened Species" on the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources' official species at risk list, as updated and amended from time to time.

Transportation systems: means a system consisting of corridors and rights-of way for the movement of people and goods, and associated transportation facilities including transit stops and stations, cycle lanes, bus lanes, high occupancy vehicle lanes, rail facilities, park'n'ride lots, service centres, rest stops, vehicle inspection stations, intermodal terminals, harbours, and associated facilities such as storage and maintenance.

Valleylands: means a natural area that occurs in a valley or other landform depression that has water flowing through or standing for some period of the year.

Vulnerable: means surface and groundwater that can be easily changed or impacted by activities or events, either by virtue of their vicinity to such activities or events or by permissive pathways between such activities and the surface and/or groundwater.

Waste management system: means sites and facilities to accommodate solid waste from one or more municipalities and includes landfill sites, recycling facilities, transfer stations, processing sites and hazardous waste depots.

Watershed: means an area that is drained by a river and its tributaries.

Wave uprush: means the rush of water up onto a shoreline or structure following the breaking of a wave; the limit of wave uprush is the point of furthest landward rush of water onto the shoreline.

Wayside pits and quarries: means a temporary pit or quarry opened and used by or for a public authority solely for the purpose of a particular project or contract of road construction and not located on the road right-of-way.

Wetlands: means lands that are seasonally or permanently covered by shallow water, as well as lands where the water table is close to or at the surface. In either case the presence of abundant water has caused the formation of hydric soils and has favoured the dominance of either hydrophytic plants or water tolerant plants. The four major types of wetlands are swamps, marshes, bogs and fens.

Periodically soaked or wet lands being used for agricultural purposes which no longer exhibit wetland characteristics are not considered to be wetlands for the purposes of this definition.

Wildlife habitat: means areas where plants, animals and other organisms live, and find adequate amounts of food, water, shelter and space needed to sustain their populations. Specific wildlife habitats of concern may include areas where species concentrate at a vulnerable point in their annual or life cycle; and areas which are important to migratory or non-migratory species.

Woodlands: means treed areas that provide environmental and economic benefits to both the private landowner and the general public, such as erosion prevention, hydrological and nutrient cycling, provision of clean air and the long-term storage of carbon, provision of wildlife habitat, outdoor recreational opportunities, and the sustainable harvest of a wide range of woodland products. *Woodlands* include treed areas, woodlots or forested areas and vary in their level of significance at the local, regional and provincial levels.

Notes

Provincial Policy Statement